

Delaine Eastin

*California's State Superintendent
of Public Instruction*



On November 3, 1998, Delaine Eastin was elected to a second four-year term as State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The

superintendency is a nonpartisan state constitutional office. Eastin is the highest ranking official in California's elementary and secondary public school system and the first woman to be elected State Superintendent.

As State Superintendent, she has spearheaded major efforts to improve reading and mathematics instruction; reduce class sizes in kindergarten through third grade; and implement statewide standards, assessment, and increased accountability for what all students should know and be able to do.

With standards, assessment, and accountability as the cornerstones of her reform program, Eastin has also advocated safe and healthy school environments, up-to-date facilities, twenty-first century technology, family-school partnerships, teacher training and professional development, higher graduation requirements, and increased resources for schools.

During her first term as superintendent, Eastin visited an average of more than one school a week, meeting with educators, students, and parents in all 58 California counties. She continues to visit schools throughout the state on a regular basis.

Prior to her election as State Superintendent, Eastin served four

terms in the State Assembly beginning in November 1986. She represented the 20th District, which includes portions of Alameda and Santa Clara counties.

As chair of the Assembly Committee on Education, she sponsored major legislation to reform the K-12 education system and improve the sagging infrastructure of California schools. She provided the backbone and blueprints for the first Net Day—a model that has been copied nationally and internationally. She was an early proponent of the charter school concept and has long advocated stronger technical and vocational training for students. Eastin also carried the legislation to create the 1994 Family School partnership Act that allows parents to take up to 40 hours off from work during the year to participate in their children's school activities. An ardent supporter of public libraries, she is responsible for the school library checkoff on the state tax form.

In addition to fighting for improved technology and libraries, Superintendent Eastin has advocated increasing and improving mathematics and science educational standards, more and better laboratory science in middle schools and high schools, and gardens in every school. She has carried on a campaign to bring the arts back into schools at all levels.

Superintendent Eastin also advocates returning librarians, counselors, and nurses to California schools. She believes in strengthening school nutrition, and she enlisted California as the first state in the

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nation to embrace the Team Nutrition program to improve the nutritional value of school lunches.

Superintendent Eastin is an advocate for universal preschool for all three- and four-year olds as well as for full-day kindergarten. She favors ending social promotion but believes that children must be given every opportunity to make the grade, with extra help after school, on Saturdays and, where possible, in summer school.

Eastin was recently given the President's Crystal Apple Award from the American Library Association; the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of California, Santa Barbara; the Woman of Achievement Award from the Women's Fund; and the Leader Award from California Leadership. She has received numerous awards from other organizations, including the California School Boards Association, the PTA, the Industrial and Technology Education Association, the Learning Alternatives Resource Network, the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges, the California Association of Regional Occupational Centers and Programs, the American Electronics Association, the American Business Women's Association, Soroptimists International, and many business and professional organizations.

In addition, a day care center in her former Assembly district was named in her honor because of her strong commitment to children. In 2001, a K-6 elementary school in Union City will be opened bearing her name.

As State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Eastin serves as the Executive Officer and Secretary of the State Board of Education and as the Director of the California Department of Education. In addition, the State Superintendent is a member of various boards and commissions that affect educational policy in the state. The most notable of these are the Regents of the University of California, the Trustees of the California State Colleges and Universities, and the California Education Round Table.

A native Californian, Eastin received her bachelor's degree from the University of California, Davis, and a master's degree in political science from the University of California, Santa Barbara. After receiving her degrees, she taught political science for seven years. Following her career in teaching, Eastin served as corporate planner for Pacific Telesis Group. She has held numerous other elected and appointed offices, including serving twice as city councilwoman in Union City.